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MILWAUKEE COUNTY EMS PRACTICAL SKILL NEEDLE THORACOSTOMY

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Signature:	
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Purpose:		Indications:	
To provide an open vent into the pleural space to decompress		Patients presenting with suspected tension	
suspected tension pneumothorax		pneumothorax	
Advantages:	Complications:		Contraindications:
Decompresses tension pneumothorax Facilitates ventilation	Intercostal artery injury latrogenic pneumothorax if original diagnosis was incorrect		None if patient meets clinical criteria

Locate suprasternal notch, move laterally to midclavicular line and locate second and third rib on side of pneumothorax

Remove protective sheath and confirm extratatheter is in place on 14 guage needle

Cleanse insertion site with alcohol

Insert needle and extracatheter at a 90 degree angle directly over third rib

When tip of needle has passed through chest wall and touches third rib, alter the angle and "walk" the needle over third rib, advancing it into the pleural cavity

Listen for escape of air to confirm placement of the catheter

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Withdraw needle and tape extracatheter in place

Dispose of contaminated materials in appropriate receptacle

NOTES:

- Signs/symptoms of a tension pneumothorax: restless/agitated; increases resistance to ventilation; jugular vein distention; severe respiratory distress; decreased or absent breath sounds on the affected side; hypotension; cyanosis; tracheal deviation away from the affected side
- Indications that procedure was successful: increase in blood pressure; loss of jugular vein distention; decreased dyspnea; easier to ventilate patient; improved color